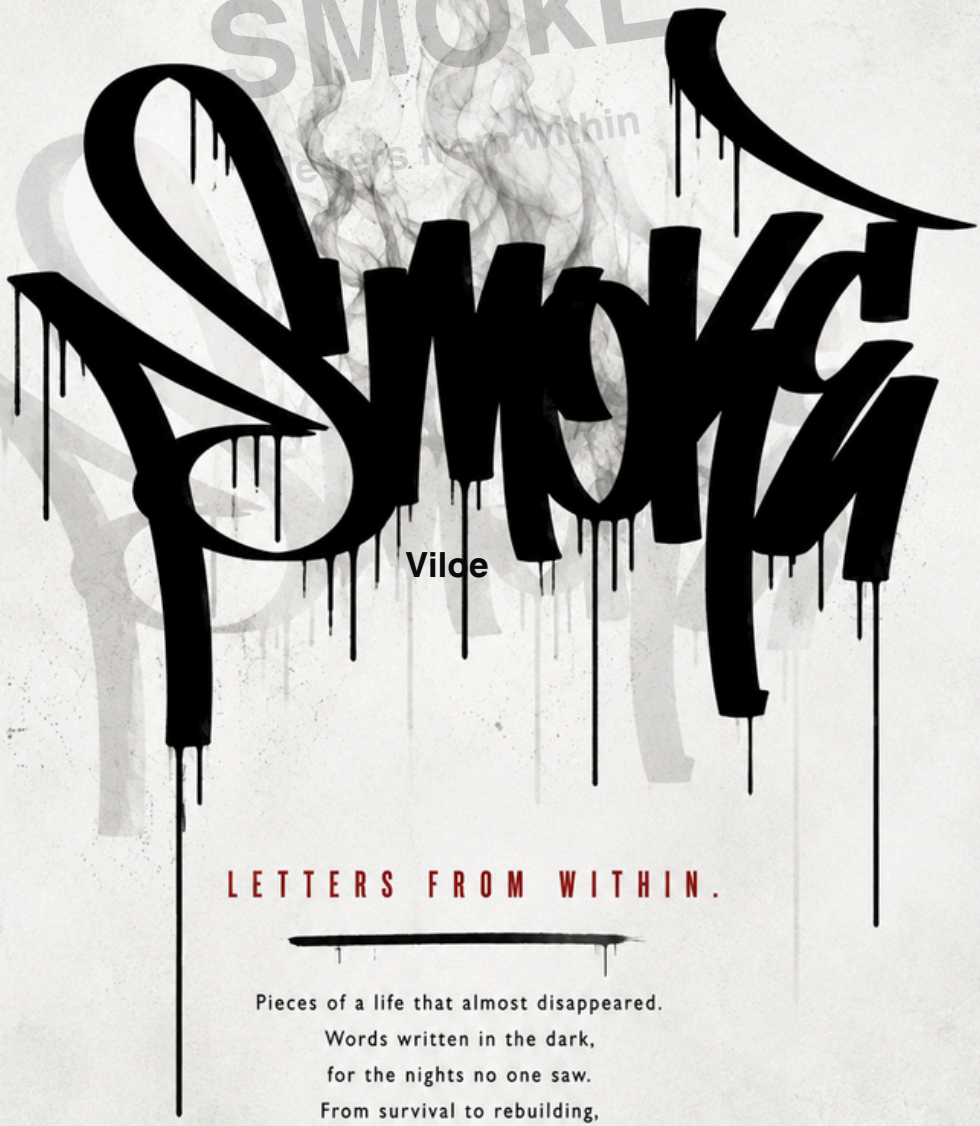
SMOKE ISN'T WHAT YOU SEE.
IT'S WHAT REMAINS.



LETTERS FROM WITHIN.

Pieces of a life that almost disappeared.
Words written in the dark,
for the nights no one saw.
From survival to rebuilding,
from pain to purpose—
this is the smoke.

VILDE

I am what remains after everything unnecessary burned away not ..ash, not ember, smoke: the part that rises.

Cartography of Scars

I've wrote off every wound

like a geographer of grief

each one a flowing river

that carried me somewhere

I didn't ask to go

but needed to be.

My life

Inheritance

They left me nothing

but the hunger.

Turns out

that was everything.

Sovereign

No shout outs

No rules

No time borrowed

from another man's dream.

I stayed 10 toes down.

from the wreckage

of every version of me

that didn't survive.

The Quiet Violence of Almost

Almost made it.

Almost stayed.

Almost loved right.

Almost believed.

Almost is a ghost

that haunts

every room

you were too afraid

to walk into.

Midnight Architecture

I built late at night

when the world

stops watching.

The best structures

were never witnessed

becoming

only standing.

Alchemy

They gave me

trash.

I gave them back

nothing.

I kept it.

Turning it gold.

Quietly.

Ceremony of One

No audience needed

for this kind of becoming.

The real rituals

happen alone

no witness

but the mirror

you're still negotiating with.

Weight

Some men wear their pain

like armor.

I wear mine

like a second skin

I can't take it off,

so I learned

to move in it.

The Long Game

Patience is violent

when practiced right.

It destroys

every cheaper version

of what you could have had

if you'd just settled

when they told you to.

Frequency

I don't speak

to be heard.

I speak

to locate myself

while I send

signals

into the dark,

waiting to hear

what echoes back.

Controlled Burn

I set my old life on fire.

Stood back.

Watched it burn

Some things

can only be dissolved

by flame.

Debt

I owe the world nothing.

The world owes me nothing.

We agreed

a long time ago

just me and the silence

shaking hands

over an empty table.

Still Water

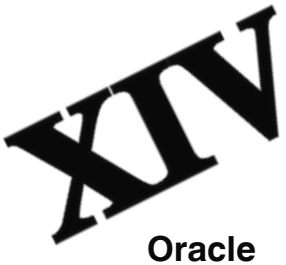
Calm is not peace.

Calm is the surface

above a depth

you haven't earned

the right to see.



Oracle

I stopped asking

what comes next

and started building

what comes next.

The difference

saved my life.

XV

The Cost of Clarity

Seeing clearly

costs you

every comfortable lie

you ever loved.

Most people

choose the blur.

XVI

Gospel of the Unnamed

No one wrote scripture

for the ones

who built alone

no congregation,

no collection plate,

just the work

and the dark

and the faith

that something is listening.

XVII

Elevation

Rising isn't glory.

Rising is the grind

of separating

from what held you.

The view

is secondary.

XVIII

Time Debt

Every year I lost

to someone else's vision

I collect now

with interest

spent on nothing

but what matters.

XIX

The Architecture of Silence

What I don't say

is load-bearing.

Remove it

and the whole structure

of who I am

collapses.

XX

Bloodline

I am the answer

to a question

my ancestors

couldn't finish asking.

I speak it fully

with every choice

I make

in the dark.

XXI

Meridian

There is a line

down the center of my life

before I knew

and after.

I live on the after side now.

I don't visit the before.

XXII

The Myth of Safety

Safe is another word

for slow death.

I chose the risk.

I chose the cold.

I chose the open water

over the shore

where everyone

was slowly

becoming stone.

XXIII

Low Frequency

Not every signal

is meant to be popular.

Some frequencies

only reach

the ones

tuned exactly right.

I broadcast for them.

XXIV

Cartographer II

I don't follow maps.

I become the terrain

let others

draw lines

around what I've crossed.

XXV

Smoke

I am what remains

after everything

unnecessary

burned away

not ash,

not ember,

smoke:

the part that rises.

XXVI

Philosophy of Hands

I believe in hands

what they build,

what they refuse,

what they reach for

at 3am

when belief

is expensive

and doubt

is free.

XXVII

The Return

Every exile ends.

Every man who walked into the wilderness

either dies there

or comes back different.

I came back different.

I came back

deciding.

XXVIII

Earned

Nothing given

lives long

in a man's chest.

Only what he bled for

takes root.

Only what cost him something

means anything.

XXIX

Dark Matter

The parts of me

you cannot see

are the parts

doing the most work

invisible mass

holding everything

in orbit.

XXX

Closing Argument

I rest my case

not with words

but with the structure

still standing

after everything

tried to bring it down.

You want proof?

Look at what remains.

Look at me

still here,

still building,

still becoming

exactly

what they said

I couldn't.

SMOI<E

First Edition

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